

REMARKS

As a preliminary matter, Applicants amended the specification to define the heading “Best Modes For Carrying Out The Invention” on page 4 to “Detailed Description Of The Invention,” and requests withdrawal of the objection on this basis.

Claims 1, 4, and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gerloff et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,694,873) in view of Peterson et al. (U.S. Patent No. 3,809,442). In response, Applicants amended claims 1 and 9 to incorporate the feature of claim 4, and respectfully traverse the rejection because Gerloff does not disclose (or suggest) the microcapsules of claims 1 and 9, as the Examiner acknowledges, and Peterson is nonanalogous prior art.

MPEP 2141.01(a) states with respect to nonanalogous prior art that a reference must be either in a field of Applicant’s endeavor or, if not, then reasonably pertinent to the particular problem of which the inventor was concerned, citing *In re Oetiker*, 977F.2d 1443, 1446, 24 USPQ2d 1443, 1445 (Fed. Cir. 1992).

Peterson is not in Applicant’s field of endeavor, namely pneumatic vehicle wheels having a run-flat support. Peterson is in the unrelated field of slide rails for snowmobiles. This is recognized by the Office. Gerloff is classified in international classes B60C 17/04 and B50B 21/12, and Peterson is classified in international classes B62m 27/02 and B62d 55/24. Gerloff’s U.S. classifications are 152/380 and 152/DIG. 20, and Peterson’s U.S. classifications are 305/14, 252/12, 308/238, 305/35 EB, and 305/14. Accordingly, both the U.S. and international classes are completely different in

Gerloff and Peterson. Additionally, the field of search for Gerloff does not overlap the field of search for Peterson, as seen on the faces of the references. For all these reasons, Applicants submit that Peterson is not in Applicants' field of endeavor.

Peterson is also not reasonably pertinent to the particular problem with which the inventor of the present invention was concerned. An object of the present invention is to provide a tire/wheel assembly having a run-flat durability further enhanced with microcapsules in a resin layer coating on a run-flat support. In particular, one object is to have a tire/wheel assembly having a run-flat support inserted into a cavity section of a pneumatic tire such that an inner peripheral surface of the pneumatic tire engages an outer peripheral surface of a run-flat body with reduced friction upon occurrence of a flat tire (see Applicants' specification paragraphs [0005] and [0007]). In the structure of the present invention, the inner surface of the pneumatic tire engages a run-flat body that is coated with a resin layer having microcapsules which burst when the tire is flat. Upon wear of the resin layer due to continued driving on the flat tire, the microcapsules release a lubricant, which reduces the wear of the resin layer and the inner surface of the tire. Accordingly, damage to the tire can be reduced (see Applicants' specification paragraphs [0008] and [0032]).

In contrast, Peterson is directed to a suspension and driving system for use on moving belts such as snowmobile tracks and conveyor belts. Peterson seeks to overcome the problem of mounting systems that use side rails, which support a drive track and maintain contact between the ground and the driving track. In particular,

Peterson is concerned with operation of the driving track when the snowmobile is crossing dry spots in terrain. Under these conditions, cooling normally furnished by melted snow or ice is absent, and increased friction occurs due to heat buildup. Peterson is concerned with a side rail 18 that fits into an elongated strip 21. Peterson is silent regarding a tire/wheel assembly or run-flat support for a pneumatic tire, or problems associated with a pneumatic tire when it becomes flat and is continued to be driven upon.

Since Peterson is not pertinent to the problems of the present invention or in Applicants' field of endeavor, Applicants respectfully request removal of Peterson as nonanalogous prior art. For all these reasons, withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection of claims 1 and 9 is respectfully requested.

New claims 13-14 are added and further define the resin layer as having at least two convex portions. Applicants request allowance of new claims 13-14 for the features recited in these claims, and also for the reasons recited above with respect to the rejection of independent claims 1 and 9.

For all of the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that this Application is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney if an interview would expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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